

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action, in rejecting independent claim 1, the Examiner argues that it would have been obvious to modify Yoshikawa to include a key touch member made of a synthetic resin having a hydrophilic polymer added thereto, as taught by Oshima. As will be further discussed below, Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection and respectfully submits that it is improper to attempt to modify Yoshikawa's perspiration-absorbing sheet to include synthetic resin as taught by Oshima.

In the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that Yoshikawa's key touch member 12 is not made of a synthetic resin nor does it include a hydrophilic polymer. Rather, as also acknowledged by the Examiner, Yoshikawa's key touch member utilizes a totally different principle of operation for absorbing moisture on a key. Yoshikawa includes a perspiration-absorbing material on the key body 11. This perspiration-absorbing sheet, as disclosed, may be formed of wood, animal skin, or ceramic material, including artificial ivory. As further disclosed, such materials are selected because they generally have a multiplicity of pores or capillaries and, hence, are able to quickly absorb moisture or sweat from the fingertips of a player on the keyboard. Col. 1, lines 40-50. Further, Yoshikawa contrasts these materials with synthetic resin when Yoshikawa discusses the problems with synthetic resin since it has a poor moisture-absorbing property. Col. 1, lines 12-18. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that it is improper to attempt to change Yoshikawa's perspiration-absorbing sheet, which is specifically disclosed to be formed of a material that is not a synthetic resin, because of the poor moisture-absorbing properties of synthetic resin, to be formed of a synthetic resin based on Oshima. Additionally, if such a substitution was made, the substitution would result in Yoshikawa having a totally different principle of operation. Applicant respectfully submits that an attempted modification of a prior art reference is improper if the modification changes the principle of operation of the modified reference. The perspiration-absorbing sheet of Yoshikawa with pores and

capillaries operates on a totally different principle of operation than the resin of Oshima.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that there would be no motivation to include a synthetic resin with the properties of Oshima in Yoshikawa's perspiration-absorbing sheet because Yoshikawa's perspiration-absorbing sheet and Oshima's keyboard resin operate on the totally different fundamental principles. As discussed above, Yoshikawa's sheet includes pores or capillaries. Applicant respectfully submits that there would be no motivation to include synthetic resin in Yoshikawa's sheet, and that, if synthetic resin was included in Yoshikawa's sheet, Yoshikawa's sheet could not function as designed since the resin would inhibit any functionality of the pores and capillaries. Therefore, Applicant also respectfully submits that it is improper to attempt to modify Yoshikawa's perspiration-absorbing sheet to include the synthetic resin of Oshima.

Further yet, Applicant respectfully submits that there would be no motivation to modify the sheet that is attached to the key in Yoshikawa based on the teaching in Oshima for a synthetic resin for forming the key itself. In Yoshikawa, the sheet is specifically not formed of the synthetic resin that is used for forming the key itself. Yoshikawa discusses the problems of the synthetic resin of the key. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that there would be no motivation for including a synthetic resin for forming a key, as taught by Oshima, in the specifically non-synthetic resin sheet that is attached to the key in Yoshikawa. Further, if the teaching of Oshima for the synthetic resin of the key was applied to Yoshikawa, there would be no further need for the key sheet in Yoshikawa. Yoshikawa would merely form its key as did Oshima and a key sheet would no longer be required. Applicant respectfully submits that it is only Applicant that has discovered the benefits of the key touch member that is disposed on the key body that is formed of a synthetic resin with a hydrophilic polymer added thereto, as discussed in Applicant's specification at least at paras. 0024 and 0025.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 is allowable over Yoshikawa and Oshima.

However, in order to even more-particularly distinguish Applicant's invention over Yoshikawa and Oshima, Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the feature where the hydrophilic polymer has a hydrophilic group in a main chain or a side chain thereof. Applicant respectfully submits that this feature of Applicant's invention is clearly disclosed in Applicant's specification at least at para. 0026. According to this feature, since water is chemically confined within the main chain or the side chain containing the hydrophilic group, it is possible to retain a larger amount of water, thereby to ensure higher hydrophilia.

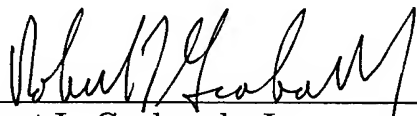
In contrast, Oshima apparently discloses a keyboard material containing a thermoplastic resin with a water-soluble polyamide resin. However, Oshima describes that the water-soluble polyamide resin is a resin formed by converting -CONH-group of amide bond at an end or in molecule of polyamide resin into methylol or formal, thereby providing water-solubility (at page 2, right and upper col., line 20 to left and lower col., line 4 of the complete document. Applicant has attached the Japanese language document for the Examiner's consideration). Thus, as is evident, Oshima fails to teach or suggest a key touch member made of a first synthetic resin having a hydrophilic polymer added thereto, the hydrophilic polymer having a hydrophilic group in a main chain or a side chain thereof, as recited in amended claim 1. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that even if the Examiner's argued combination of Yoshikawa and Oshima can be made, the features of amended claim 1 are still not disclosed by the cited references.

Applicant respectfully submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If there are any questions regarding this Amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

As provided above, this paper includes a Petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket No. 056272.58171US).

Respectfully submitted,
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Attachment
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